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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/811,447	03/20/2001	Shuichi Yabu	35.G2760	9561

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EXAMINER

MATHEWS, ALAN A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2851

DATE MAILED: 09/12/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application N .	Applicant(s)
	09/811,447	YABU, SHUICHI
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Alan A. Mathews	2851

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-55 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-5,9-15,17-19,21-25,29-35,37-39,41-48 and 52 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 6-8,16,20,26-28,36,40,49-51 and 53-55 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1.) Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2.) Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3.) Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____ . |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(e) the invention was described in-

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or
(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

2. Claims 1, 3, 5, 9, 11-15, and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hase et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6,252,648). Hase et al. discloses in figure 1 a chamber 2j. The first gas supply means is 8a and the second gas supply means is 10a (the first could be 10a and the second could be 8a). The switching mechanism includes electromagnetic valve 10c. The gas is also supplied to the lens barrel 5 through lens barrels 2h and 2i. With respect to claim 9, column 3, line 46 discloses the use of ultraviolet light.

3. Claims 1-5, 9-15, 17-19, 21-25, 29-35, 37-39, 48, and 52 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by the PCT Publication WO 00/31780. The PCT Publication WO 00/31780 discloses in figure 1 a purge gas supply systems 28 and 69 (see EP 1 143 491 A1 for a

translation). The first gas supply unit includes element 34 and a second gas supply unit includes element 32 (see column 10, lines 29-57 of EP 1 143 491 A1). Alternatively, element 32 could be the first gas supply unit and 34 could be the second gas supply unit. Elements 36 and 37 are the switching mechanism.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 41-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hase et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6,252,648) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Ogushi et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6,385,497). Hase et al. discloses the invention claimed except for placing the apparatus in an automated environment. Ogushi et al. discloses a remote maintenance system for a semiconductor factory in which manufacturing apparatuses are connected by a local area network that is made accessible to an external network. The apparatuses are connected to a computer with networking software that makes a database of maintenance information available to a user at a location other than the factory via the external network. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to place

the exposure apparatus of Hase et al. in an automated semiconductor device factory in view of Ogushi et al. for the well known purpose of improved productivity and control.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 6-8, 16, 20, 26-28, 36, 40, 49-51, 53-55 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The patents to Miyaji et al., Murayama et al., Nakamura, and Takiguchi are cited to show purging chambers with nitrogen gas. The other patents are cited to show the use of nitrogen or other gases.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alan A. Mathews whose telephone number is (703) 308-1706. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Russ Adams can be reached on (703) 308-2847. The fax phone numbers for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 305-3431 for regular communications and 305-3431 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.



Alan A. Mathews
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2851

AAM
September 9, 2002